

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1           1.   (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 comprising:

3           an inner shaft having a fitting portion;

4           an outer hollow shaft having a fitting portion  
5 fitted on said fitting portion of said inner shaft such  
6 that said inner shaft and said outer shaft are  
7 telescopically movable in an axial direction and  
8 incapable of rotating relative to each other;

9           concave grooves formed in said fitting portion of  
10 said inner shaft;

11          filling holes, formed in said fitting portion of  
12 said outer shaft, through which said concave grooves are  
13 filled with a resin, resinous slide portions thus being  
14 formed on said fitting portions of said inner and outer  
15 shafts; and

16          a one-piece, substantially annular low frictional  
17 member fixedly attached to an inner peripheral surface of  
18 a front side end of said fitting portion of said outer

19 shaft, and with radial clearance to an outer peripheral  
20 surface of said inner shaft.

1        2. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 1, wherein said low  
3 frictional member is constructed of a ring made of a  
4 synthetic resin.

1        3. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 comprising:  
3        an inner shaft having a fitting portion;  
4        an outer shaft having a fitting portion in which said  
5 fitting portion of said inner shaft is received, the  
6 fitting portions being connected to each other non-  
7 rotatably and for relative telescoping movement to collapse  
8 the shaft assembly in response to an impact force;  
9        said inner shaft having a reduced diameter portion  
10 extending from said fitting portion thereof in a direction  
11 of collapse of said outer shaft relative to said inner  
12 shaft, said outer shaft having an end portion extending  
13 beyond said fitting portion of said inner shaft so as to  
14 receive said reduced diameter portion of said inner shaft;  
15 and

16           a low frictional member attached to said end portion  
17 of said outer shaft for movement therewith relative to said  
18 inner shaft during collapse of the shaft assembly, and  
19 through which said end portion of said outer shaft and said  
20 reduced diameter portion of said inner shaft can slide  
21 relative to each other during the collapse of the shaft  
22 assembly, said low frictional member being disposed with a  
23 radial clearance to an outer peripheral surface of said  
24 reduced diameter portion of said inner shaft.

1           4. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 3, wherein said low frictional  
3 member is axially fixed to said end portion of said outer  
4 shaft.

1           5. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 4, wherein said low frictional  
3 member is a resin member.

1           6. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 5, wherein said end portion of said  
3 outer shaft has an axial end opening and a recess formed in  
4 an inner peripheral surface adjacent to said axial end

5 opening, and wherein said resin member is axially fixed to  
6 an inner periphery of in said end portion of said outer  
7 shaft recess.

1        7. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 6, wherein said recess and said resin  
3 member isare substantially annular.

1        8. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 4, wherein said end portion of said  
3 outer shaft has an axial end opening and a recess formed in  
4 an inner peripheral surface adjacent to said axial end  
5 opening, and wherein said low frictional member is axially  
6 fixed to an inner periphery of in said end portion of said  
7 outer shaftrecess.

1        9. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 3, wherein said fitting  
3 portions are connected to each other by a resin connecting  
4 portion.

1        10. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 9, wherein said resin

3 connecting portion is formed in a groove in said fitting  
4 portion of said inner shaft and an adjacent hole of said  
5 fitting portion of said outer shaft.

1 11. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 10, wherein said low frictional  
3 member is axially fixed to said end portion of said outer  
4 shaft.

1 12. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 11, wherein said low frictional  
3 member is a resin member.

1 13. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 12, wherein said end portion of said  
3 outer shaft has an axial end opening and a recess formed in  
4 an inner peripheral surface adjacent to said axial end  
5 opening, and wherein said resin member is axially fixed to  
6 an inner periphery of in said end portion of said outer  
7 shaftrecess.

1        14. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 13, wherein said recess and said resin  
3 member ~~is~~are substantially annular.

1        15. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 9, wherein said end portion of said  
3 outer shaft has an axial end opening and a recess formed in  
4 an inner peripheral surface adjacent to said axial end  
5 opening, and wherein said low frictional member is axially  
6 ~~fixed to an inner periphery of~~in ~~said end portion of said~~  
7 ~~outer shaft~~recess.

1        16. (Previously presented) A collapsible shaft  
2 assembly according to claim 15, wherein said low frictional  
3 member is a resin member.

1        17. (Currently amended) A collapsible shaft assembly  
2 according to claim 16, wherein said recess and said resin  
3 member ~~is~~are substantially annular.

1        18. (New) A collapsible shaft assembly according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said front side end of said fitting  
3 portion of said outer shaft has an axial end opening and a

4 substantially annular recess formed in said inner  
5 peripheral surface adjacent to said axial end opening, and  
6 wherein said low frictional member is axially fixed in said  
7 recess.

1 19. (New) A collapsible shaft assembly according to  
2 claim 1, wherein said low frictional member is a pre-formed  
3 member which is inserted into said front side end of said  
4 fitting portion of said outer shaft.

1 20. (New) A collapsible shaft assembly according to  
2 claim 3, wherein said low frictional member is a pre-formed  
3 member which is inserted into said end portion of said  
4 outer shaft.